

# Special Operations Forces and Conventional Forces

## Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence

BY JASON WESBROCK, GLENN HARNED, AND PRESTON PLOUS

*"The partnership between conventional and special operations forces is stronger than ever."<sup>1</sup>*

- Honorable Michael D. Lumpkin, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict, March 18, 2015

*In mid-2003, then Major General Ray Odierno, commanding general of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (ID), had a short meeting with incoming and outgoing special operations leadership. The topic: how to capture Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator who had slipped out of Baghdad prior to the coalition conquering the city. Intelligence sources of the 4<sup>th</sup> ID scoured the areas around Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, gathering information but not developing any solid leads. The staff proposed another approach: Operation Red Dawn, a combined special operations forces (SOF) and conventional forces (CF) intelligence and direct action effort to find and capture Hussein. The SOF-CF team developed an intelligence collection strategy that focused on five families with ties to Hussein, rapidly narrowing the search to the deposed leader's trusted confidants and family members. Relying on SOF network-mapping capabilities and direct action skills integrated with 4<sup>th</sup> ID intelligence processing and mobility assets, the SOF-CF team jointly conducted raids, interrogations, and rapid analysis that led to one key individual with direct connections to Hussein. On the evening of December 13, 2003, the 4<sup>th</sup> ID's 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team joined with SOF*

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*to raid a small farm on the outskirts of Tikrit, eventually discovering a small “spider hole.” When the troops pulled the cover off the spider hole, a haggard-looking bearded man raised his hands and said, “I am Saddam Hussein. I am the President of Iraq, and I am willing to negotiate.” The SOF leader calmly replaced the cover on the hole and replied, “President Bush sends his regards.”<sup>2</sup>*

The SOF-CF integration, interoperability, and interdependence (I-3) demonstrated during Operation *Red Dawn* was born out of

the manual still described special operations as geographically separate from conventional operations. In this era of Air Land Battle, SOF and CF deconflicted their activities in time and space, and executed their missions independently of one another. As the Global War on Terrorism progressed, both forces found themselves operating in close proximity, increasingly dependent on each other for mutual support, but without mechanisms to operate together effectively.<sup>3</sup> Initially, the joint force faced several I-3 challenges such as incompatible communications, inefficient command and control, and unfamiliarity with the tactics,

### Defining SOF-CF Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence

**Integration** – The arrangement of CF and SOF and their actions to create a force that operates by engaging as a whole.

**Interoperability** – The ability of SOF and CF systems, units, and forces to operate in the execution of assigned tasks.

**Interdependence** – The purposeful reliance by CF and SOF on each other’s capabilities to maximize the complementary and reinforcing effects of both.

*Source: Joint Publication 3-05.1, “Unconventional Warfare,” September 15, 2015, pages I-12-13.*

necessity, much like in the opening days of Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan. U.S. forces were not always open to this sort of synergy, but the last 15 years of conflict have changed the operational paradigm. Before the attacks of September 11, 2001, SOF and CF normally worked in separate areas of operation as a matter of doctrine. The 1986 edition of Army Field Manual 100-05, *Operations*, limited discussion of SOF operations to actions deep in enemy territory, working with indigenous forces, and performing deep reconnaissance, strikes, and raids. The 1993 version of

techniques, and procedures of each. The joint force has improved significantly since 2001. It has honed the capability to work well together in large-scale military operations, such as in Afghanistan, where they conducted village stability operations and built the Afghan local police.<sup>4</sup> In both Iraq and Afghanistan, SOF liaison elements and intelligence-operations fusion cells proved vital to synchronizing SOF and CF operations and increasing mission effectiveness. By becoming more interoperable, integrating their operations, and relying on interdependence for mutual support, SOF and

CF increased mission success with fewer resources. A solid foundation for maintaining SOF-CF I-3 at an adequate level exists. This foundation, however, is fragile, and it is dependent on adequate and enduring investments in training and readiness.<sup>5</sup> Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey recognized this problem and in 2013 directed a study to identify ways to institutionalize and enhance SOF-CF I-3. The study team interviewed more than 70 leaders in the Department of Defense (DOD), including service chiefs and combatant commanders. The general consensus was that SOF-CF I-3 has never been better, but a deliberate effort is necessary to preserve these gains.<sup>6</sup> Without such an effort, the joint force will need to reinvent today's I-3 processes at the expense of blood and treasure. This article highlights three major

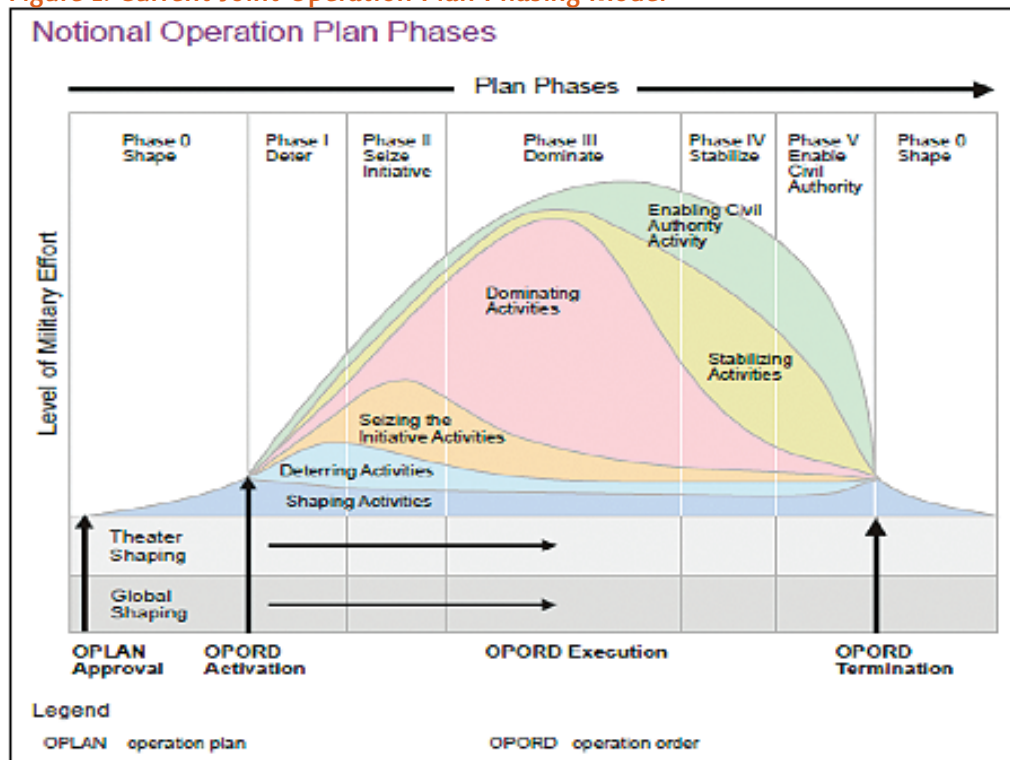
areas that require further effort: the SOF-CF I-3 operational construct, command and control relationships, and the baselining of SOF-CF I-3 as an enduring requirement.

### Operational Construct

*"Fundamentally, a SOF commander conducting CT [counterterrorism] or C-VEO [counter-violent extremist organizations] needs a different decision matrix than a conventional commander focused on maneuver warfare and seizing terrain."<sup>7</sup>—Major General James Linder, commander, Special Operations Command Africa, December 12, 2015*

One cause of friction between SOF and CF at the outset of operations *Enduring Freedom* and *Iraqi Freedom* stemmed from differing

Figure 1. Current Joint Operation Plan Phasing Model<sup>8</sup>



views on how to design, plan, and execute operations and campaigns. The Joint Publication 5.0 model for “enemy-centric” campaigning is appropriate for major combat operations, but may generate sub-optimal outcomes in a “population-centric” operational environment. SOF views campaign design differently from the six-phase model in joint doctrine depicted above.<sup>9</sup> From the SOF perspective, this phasing model focuses on achieving operational military end-states, not strategic civil-military outcomes.

The Joint Staff did not intend for this model to be a prescriptive template for joint operations, but it has become that in practice. Many believe this model emphasizes defeating an enemy armed force at the expense of activities that secure the victory and achieve a strategic outcome favorable to U.S. interests. This difference between SOF and CF views of campaigning can hamper integration from the start of an operation if components of the joint force do not agree on how a campaign should be designed. The Strategic Landpower Task Force initiated the “Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning” (JCIC) that addresses this gap, and ongoing revisions to joint doctrine provide opportunities for change.<sup>10</sup> For example, the JCIC places new emphasis on orienting joint campaigns on political outcomes—not just military success and ending military operations, multiple forms of national power working in unison to achieve those political outcomes, and the long-term post-combat consolidation of military success to establish the preconditions for achieving strategic success. The current revision draft of Joint Publication 5.0 “Joint Operation Planning” presents alternative operation design options, and does not presently contain the phasing model illustration shown above.<sup>11</sup> Additionally,

U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) is developing special operations campaigning doctrine to guide both SOF operational art and operational design.<sup>12</sup> SOF-CF integration should become more natural once each understands the others’ preferred operational constructs.

The joint force is taking steps to address the need for both traditional and alternative campaign designs that speak to differences between enemy-centric and population-centric approaches. SOCOM is leading an effort to produce and implement a Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations (JC HAMO), which details the capabilities needed to engage with relevant actors, groups, and populations across the range of military operations. This concept arose from a conversation between General James Amos, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Joseph Votel, the commander of SOCOM, and General Raymond Odierno, the Army Chief of Staff, concerning challenges to the joint force’s ability to operate effectively in population-centric environments. The U.S. Army has adopted “Engagement” as a seventh warfighting function, citing many of the same population-centric requirements as the JC HAMO. Then Army Chief of Staff General Odierno said he believes this new function will lead to greater SOF-CF integration in Army professional military education. He expressed his vision of “a global network of SOF and CF capabilities operating in the human domain,” but added an entity in the “joint world” is necessary to shepherd the development of such a network.<sup>13</sup>

SOF and CF routinely employ military engagement capabilities<sup>14</sup> outside designated combat zones, like training and advising indigenous security forces, and operating differently

than they would in a combat zone. As such, the degree of integration also differs in this “Chief of Mission environment,”<sup>15</sup> mostly in how SOF and CF coordinate resources. While joint force commanders (JFCs) facilitate SOF-CF I-3 in designated combat zones, no equivalent JFC exists below the geographic combatant command or regional joint task force (JTF) level outside a joint operational area. Geographic combatant commands and joint task forces normally are not involved in the day-to-day integration of activities at the country level. During the Cold War, commanders of joint military assistance and advisory groups functioned as country-level JFCs and exercised authority over all U.S. military forces and activities in the country. Commanders of today’s security cooperation organizations generally do not exercise operational or tactical control of in-country U.S. forces, and senior defense officials are not empowered to fill the void. Joint forces miss opportunities for greater synergy when elements conduct in-country activities separately.

Doctrine provides the intellectual foundation for joint organization, training, and education. SOCOM has made progress toward mutual understanding of best practices for SOF operations. For example, SOCOM is now a voting member of the Joint Doctrine Development Community, and serves as the lead agent for six joint publications.<sup>16</sup> SOCOM revised special operations doctrine to enable better understanding by a wider DOD audience.<sup>17</sup> While progress continues, doctrinal gaps remain. The joint force lacks sufficient doctrine that describes how SOF and CF integrate, interoperate, and depend on each other at the operational level. Joint doctrine should articulate integrated campaign design and planning, battlespace ownership and

management, CF administrative and logistic support of SOF, and command relationships.

### Command and Control (C2) Relationships

*“Command and control is an art, not a science. It is very personality dependent.”<sup>18</sup>*

—General Joseph Votel, commander, SOCOM, December 19, 2014

*On March 2, 2002, U.S. and Afghan forces conducted Operation ANACONDA to dislodge Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other extremist elements from the Shahikot Valley. Coalition forces encountered a much larger number of enemy than anticipated, and the ensuing battle resulted in the loss of eight U.S. service members. A number of C2 issues contributed to inefficient execution, including the transfer of operational control (OPCON) from the Joint Special Operations Task Forces (JSOTFs) to the conventional JTF despite a special operations/indigenous forces main effort, national and theater SOF operating under separate chains of command, and the failure to include the Joint Force Air Component in the planning process until two days before the operation.*

Improper or confusing command relationships can compromise a mission; conversely, effective C2 relationships can achieve unity of effort. For SOF, the JSOTFs have proven their worth during deployments throughout the last 15 years, forming the basis for SOF C2 at the tactical level. JSOTFs usually are built around the core of a U.S. Army Special Forces Group, commanded by a

colonel. Because SOF had no operational level headquarters below the theater special operations commands, JSOTFs often were pressed into service as operational-level C2 structures. They often, however, lacked the staff, experience, and rank structure to function well at the operational level. At times, this resulted in the misuse of SOF and a lack of synergy between SOF and CF. When it became evident that SOF needed a more robust C2 capability in Afghanistan, SOCOM established Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A), in 2011 as a general/flag officer command to exercise OPCON of both national and theater SOF, and to facilitate the operational level integration of SOF and CF actions. A second SOJTF now performs similar functions in Iraq, but both remain temporary organizations. Recognizing the need for a permanent structure, the Army converted the First Special Forces Command Headquarters into a deployable 2-star organization that can serve as the core of a SOJTF. This new organization provides an operational level capability, but its existence does not mean a SOJTF will always command special operators and their CF partners, even when SOF are the main effort.

Confusion and disagreement often arises regarding who should retain OPCON of SOF.<sup>19</sup> This disagreement causes uncertainty as to where I-3 efforts should occur and where processes should be institutionalized. Services that develop and field JTF-capable headquarters<sup>20</sup> often believe the JFC should exercise OPCON over all subordinate forces in order to maintain unity of command. From the SOF perspective, command relationships must be purposeful. As one SOF general officer stated, "Integration does not mean CF absorbing SOF. Sometimes unity of effort is just as good as, or

better than, unity of command."<sup>21</sup> SOCOM believes theater special operations commands (TSOCs) should retain OPCON of SOF, allowing the TSOCs to approve mission and task organization changes, as well as reallocate SOF assets to support higher-priority tasks. SOCOM believes JFCs should exercise tactical control (TACON) of SOF, allowing them to direct and control SOF actions within the JFC's operational area. This "OPCON versus TACON" argument remains unresolved; it is perhaps so mission-dependent that it should remain open.

Many in the conventional force question whether unity of effort and supported/supporting command relationships are adequate for unified action. This includes giving SOF OPCON or TACON over CF assets. While cases in which CF units are attached to a SOF command do exist, as in village stability operations, a general resistance to SOF exercising OPCON or TACON over CF remains.<sup>22</sup> The nature of CF and SOF command structures contributes to this resistance. SOF C2 tends to be very lean, agile, and flexible, without much excess capacity. CF C2 tends to be robust, capable, and resilient, but it is also slower to respond to changing situations. According to one senior CF leader who recently returned from Afghanistan, this results in some SOF leaders viewing the CF as too slow; conversely, some CF leaders view SOF as "cowboys" who are incapable of true joint C2. Absent a trusted personal relationship, these perceptions inhibit the assignment of units to each other's formations, hampering and complicating cooperation.

Every senior leader interviewed for the Chairman's SOF-CF I-3 study stressed the importance of personal relationships.<sup>23</sup> Whether forged in battle or formed through



interactions during training and education, these longstanding connections reduced resistance toward integration and enhanced cooperation. U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps leaders were particularly impressed with the positive effects trusted relationships had on enhancing communication and leveraging each other's capabilities. Senior leaders also understand that as combat operations decrease, the opportunities for developing trusted relationships will decrease as well unless the services and combatant commands are proactive in developing and supporting them in other venues.

Liaison elements help mitigate the lack of trusted relationships, and a general consensus exists that SOF liaison elements at CF headquarters play a critical role in SOF-CF I-3.<sup>24</sup> Since 2001, the number and size of SOF liaison elements expanded from a few personnel in key areas to encompass CF organizations and interagency partners. These SOF liaison elements facilitate communication, maintain trust, and bolster relationships. While CF liaison elements to SOF headquarters also play a role, many participants thought SOF liaison components in CF organizations provide adequate communication and kept both headquarters informed of the other's operations. Despite their utility, liaison officer positions often are not authorized on manning documents, and they may become the first positions to be cut as personnel authorizations decrease.

### Baselining SOF-CF I-3

*"We cannot allow the pre-9/11 gaps between SOF and conventional forces to re-emerge."*<sup>25</sup>—General Mark Milley, commander, Army Forces Command, March 30, 2015

In May 2011, elements of the 82nd Airborne Division deployed as Task Force One Panther to support Combined/Joint Special Operations Task Force–Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) and execute village stability operations in Regional Command–North. Task Force One Panther augmented elements of the 1st and 5th Special Forces Groups and SEAL Team 7. SOF and CF leveraged each other's strengths and worked together so well that the commander of CJSOTF-A designated Task Force One Panther as a Special Operations Task Force (SOTF). This SOTF assumed responsibility for village stability operations across Regional Command–North and exercised TACON of attached SOF elements. SOF C2 assets were freed up to accomplish other tasks, and Task Force One Panther was fully capable of exercising TACON of SOF. SOF were not "chopped" to the 82nd Airborne Division; rather, Task Force One Panther became a SOF C2 element under the CJSOTF-A.

Understanding each other's operational context and solving C2 issues will gain the joint force nothing if institutional knowledge and experience for SOF-CF I-3 disappears. Baselining integration as an enduring requirement entails education, establishing habitual training relationships, and creating standards and measures. Ideally, the joint force should operate as seamlessly as Task Force One Panther in the above example. For those elements of the joint force not committed to contingency operations, joint training and readiness funds are critical to maintaining a baseline capability. The Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) is an Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense-funded program that enhances integrated training by adding service, combatant command, and combat support enablers to the training environment. JNTC

programs have significant positive impact, and the programs provide venues for mitigating incompatibilities between SOF and CF and reduce the difficulty of synchronizing service force generation and training cycles. The SOF-CF relationship during training has improved tremendously over the last decade.

Joint National Training Capability programs allow SOF and CF to train together on a regular basis—something that should also occur outside the JNTC framework. Habitual training relationships build confidence, personal connections, and trust.<sup>26</sup> They also help resolve C2 difficulties before units deploy under the same JFC.<sup>27</sup> Habitual training relationships enhance effectiveness and are a high priority for the geographic combatant commands. General Votel, while commander of SOCOM, cited three successful examples: establishing habitual relationships between

SOF and the Army's regionally aligned forces in U.S. Africa Command; establishing Special Operations Command-Forward East, West, and South in Africa; and SOCOM aligning SOF to the Pacific Pathways exercise series.<sup>28</sup> The challenge is convincing the services to commit limited funds and resources to create and maintain habitual training relationships with SOF units while considering the tempo of SOF operations.<sup>29</sup> JNTC funding has been cut significantly since 2011, and the services have limited funding to make up the difference. Restoring JNTC funding would better enable the services to train in a complex joint environment and incorporate SOF-CF I-3. Absent adequate funding, the services will prioritize exercise requirements directly related to their core missions.

Professional military education is also vital to maintaining SOF-CF integration. The



Major Daniel W. Clark, U.S. Army

Pacific Pathways 2014, pictured above, represented a prime opportunity for SOF and CF forces to gain experiences training both together and with partner forces.



current joint and service curricula regarding SOF-CF I-3 is insufficient. While it contains SOF learning objectives, SOF-CF I-3 often is taught only in SOF elective courses. Several flag officers expressed concern that professional military education institutions teach SOF education at the comprehension level of learning without requiring students to apply that knowledge to solve I-3 issues in wargames or exercises. This leads to an incomplete understanding of SOF-CF synergy. To rectify this problem, the Joint Staff J7 is identifying relevant universal joint tasks to enable joint learning areas and objectives. More emphasis is required to incorporate SOF-CF integration into core curricula at the application level of learning.<sup>30</sup> Without specific requirements for SOF-CF integration, the subject will not compete favorably for scarce classroom and exercise time.

A lack of specific integration requirements also means a dearth of metrics. The DOD lacks the ability to measure the current level of SOF-CF I-3 and to set targets for preserving or enhancing institutionalization. Metrics are difficult because integration is not easily quantifiable, and circumstances vary as situations change. Despite being difficult to quantify, both senior leadership and subject matter experts proposed several ways to measure I-3: the degree of integration of SOF-CF tasks into professional military education, training events, and exercises; the number of SOF personnel assigned to predominantly CF staffs and command billets (and vice versa); the participation rates in training events and exercises; and mission success. To aid in developing metrics, SOCOM and the Joint Staff J7 currently are leading an effort to identify or create relevant universal joint tasks and measures that

will assist in assessing the adequacy of SOF-CF I-3 within the joint force.

## Conclusion

*"Special Operations Forces and Conventional Forces partners must continue to institutionalize integration, interdependence, and interoperability."*<sup>31</sup>

—General Joseph Votel, commander, SOCOM, January 27, 2015

SOF-CF I-3 is the glue that holds these two elements of the joint force together, making it more effective and efficient in nearly any situation. This integration has never been more effective, but institutionalization has not kept pace. Failure to institutionalize I-3 will create significant challenges for the future joint force.

The DOD has not completely lost the initiative, and unique processes are not required to preserve the integration developed during the past 15 years. DOD leadership can mitigate many of the institutionalization shortfalls by changing some of the ways the department trains, educates, and resources the joint force. In this context, the services endorsed implementation of 23 recommendations from the SOF-CF I-3 Study Report, several of which are already being put into practice. For example, SOF-CF I-3 is now defined in Joint Publication 3.05-1 "Unconventional Warfare;" the Joint Staff J7, in concert with SOCOM, is identifying and/or developing appropriate Universal Joint Tasks; and the Office of the Secretary of Defense is taking steps to identify funding levels needed to preserve SOF-CF I-3 gains during joint exercises.

The state of SOF-CF I-3 is as dynamic as the operational environment. The roles of SOF

and CF will continue to evolve as the joint force adapts to the changing operational environment. While the joint force stands at a time of unprecedented success in integrating SOF and CF, we will pay a heavy price in blood and treasure if we fail to preserve this progress.

## PRISM

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Honorable Michael D. Lumpkin. Statement Before the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress Armed Services Committee, 18 March 2015, page 6, available at: <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/as/as26/20150318/103157/hmtg-114-as26-wstate-lumpkinm-20150318.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> USAICoE Command History Office, "Operation RED DAWN nets Saddam Hussein," US Army, December 6, 2013, available at <[https://www.army.mil/article/116559/Operation\\_RED\\_DAWN\\_nets\\_Saddam\\_Hussein/](https://www.army.mil/article/116559/Operation_RED_DAWN_nets_Saddam_Hussein/)>.

<sup>3</sup> SOCOM Publication 3-33, *Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Conventional Forces and Special Operations Forces Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence*, (Air-Land-Sea Application Center, March 2014). Note: SOCOM designated this publication as SOCOM Publication 3-33, and the Services assigned their own numbers to it.

<sup>4</sup> Major William Canda III (USA), "Tactical Special Operations and Conventional Force Interdependence: The Future of Land Force

Development" (Master's thesis, United States Military Academy, 2013), 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this article, an enduring requirement is one that requires resourcing beyond the Future Years Defense Plan (FYDP). Containing the Soviets during the Cold War was an enduring requirement, and the DoD programmed money as such.

<sup>6</sup> Joint Staff J7 Office of Irregular Warfare, "Special Operations Forces and Conventional Forces Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence Report," April 2015.

<sup>7</sup> MG James Linder, Interview with the authors, 12 December 2015

<sup>8</sup> Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, August 11, 2011), p. III-39, Figure III-16.

<sup>9</sup> Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, August 11, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> The revision of JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*" (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, August 11, 2011); JP 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, July 16, 2014); JP 3-33, *Joint Task Force Headquarters* (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, July 30, 2012); and JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, August 11, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Joint Publication 5-0 *Joint Operation Planning* Revision Draft (Washington DC, The Joint Staff, 14 June 2016)

<sup>12</sup> While there is no SOCOM doctrine, USASOC created its own campaign planning guidance. See: USASOC. "Special Operations Forces Campaign Planner's Handbook of Operational Art and Design (Version 2.0)." US Army. September 16, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> General Raymond Odierno, Chief of Staff, United States Army. Interview with the authors, 31 March 2015

<sup>14</sup> Joint Publication 1-02 defines military engagement as, "Routine contact and interaction between individuals or elements of the Armed Forces of the United States and those of another nation's armed forces, or foreign and domestic civilian authorities or agencies to build trust and confidence, share information, coordinate mutual activities, and maintain influence." See: JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, updated February 15, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> A "Chief of Mission" environment is one outside designated theaters of armed combat, where the Chief of Mission has final authority over US government activities. A "Title 10" environment

usually refers to a designated theater of armed combat, where the Geographic combatant command or joint force Commander has authority.

<sup>16</sup> SOCOM has the lead for Joint Publications 3-05, "Special Operations;" 3-05.1, "Unconventional Warfare;" 3-13.2, "Military Information Support Operations;" 3-22, "Foreign Internal Defense;" 3-26, "Counterterrorism;" and 3-57, "Civil-Military Operations."

<sup>17</sup> JP 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, July 16, 2014), III-4 to III-5.

<sup>18</sup> General Joseph Votel. Interview with the authors, 19 December 2014

<sup>19</sup> Operational control (OPCON) is "The authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission." Tactical control is "The authority over forces that is limited to the detailed direction and control of movements or maneuvers within the operational area necessary to accomplish missions or tasks assigned."

<sup>20</sup> A JTF-capable HQ is one that can command and control a major operation with both partner nation and joint force components. This is notionally thought of as a 2-star HQ, equivalent to an Army/USMC Division or a Numbered Air Force, although the actual rank of the commander is dependent on the situation.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with the authors, granted under non-attribution, 2015

<sup>22</sup> Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (OASD SO/LIC) and SOCOM, "Special Operations Forces (SOF) Command and Control (C2) Study: Revised Final Report," Department of Defense, July 6, 2009, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Joint Staff J7 Office of Irregular Warfare, "Special Operations Forces and Conventional Forces Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence Report," April 2015.

<sup>24</sup> These elements include the Special Operations Liaison Elements inside Air Operations Centers, the Special Operations Forces Liaison Elements with Marine Expeditionary Units, and the Special Operations Command and Control Elements employed across the joint force.

<sup>25</sup> General Mark Milley. Interview with the authors, 30 March 2015

<sup>26</sup> Habitual training relationships are relationships between units or types of units that enable them

to conduct pre-deployment training together on a regular basis, in preparation for working together during operational missions.

<sup>27</sup> ALSA Multi-Service Pub 3-33 states „CF and SOF units should meet and integrate early to foster the relationship, instill the ‘one team, one fight’ mentality, understand each other’s staff planning procedures, and defuse any misconceptions or friction points. If at all possible, units should attend training events together, at training centers or as part of joint exercises.“ (pg. 21).

<sup>29</sup> Joint Staff J7 Office of Irregular Warfare, "Special Operations Forces and Conventional Forces Integration, Interoperability, and Interdependence Report," April 2015.

<sup>29</sup> SOCOM is prohibited by law from spending "SOF-specific" Major Force Program-11 money to support CF training.

<sup>30</sup> OASD SO/LIC, "Irregular Warfare Education Study," (Washington, DC: September 20, 2013), 29.

<sup>31</sup> General Joseph Votel. Remarks to the National Defense Industrial Association's SO/LIC Symposium, 27 January 2015